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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 0656
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1494
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA 0616
RUEHTN/AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN 5521
RUEH DU/AMCONSUL DURBAN 9745
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4140
INFO RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE
RUEHTN/AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN 5522
RUEH DU/AMCONSUL DURBAN 9746
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RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/11/2018
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [ECON](#) [SF](#) [ZI](#)
SUBJECT: ZUMA WARNS OF CRISIS ON ZIMBABWE

REF: PRETORIA 729

Classified By: Political Counselor Raymond L. Brown. Reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

¶1. (U) On 10 April, ANC President Jacob Zuma addressed the Durban Chamber of Commerce and Industry's annual dinner. While not the focus of his remarks, Zuma specifically took up the issue of Zimbabwe. Laughing incredulously at one point, he said "all things we never thought of are happening in Zimbabwe." Zuma added, "You have never heard of a situation anywhere where people will vote, and the electoral commission just sits on the results without saying anything." Zuma said all parties should respect the will of the people, as well as the rule of law, and that disputes should be resolved through legal channels. He said that the ANC had already expressed concern for the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission's delay in announcing the election results. The ANC President again urged the release of the results as soon as possible before Zimbabwe "plunged into a more serious crisis." Zuma appealed to the record crowd of 1,700 in Durban to ensure that the "hard-won" political peace in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) province between the ANC and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) be maintained. He said that he did not want KZN to be compared to the north (referring to Zimbabwe).

¶2. (U) In his wide-ranging remarks, Zuma sought to assure Durban business leaders of the ANC's commitment to democracy, fighting crime, and overcoming the electricity crisis in South Africa. Zuma described the ANC's December conference and its results as demonstrating the party's "maturity" and its commitment to democracy. He reminded the audience that the ANC had presided over an economy that had recorded the highest growth in South African history over an extended period of time. Employment, though still insufficient, was on the rise and the overall outlook for South Africa's economy was favorable. Zuma pressed for a new "urgency" in the battle against crime, calling for street committees and the closing of legal loopholes favoring criminals.

¶3. (C) COMMENT. Zuma's comments are in sharp contrast to President Mbeki's and other SAG officials' more muted public responses to the Zimbabwe crisis. A week after the polls, Mbeki publicly urged "patience" and described the situation as "manageable." Then on 10 April, both Deputy Foreign Minister Aziz Pahad and Deputy President Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka told the press that the international community had unrealistic expectations of what South Africa could achieve. "We are not a government who can ask other

presidents to step down; Zimbabwe is not a province of South Africa," Pahad said. Zuma's comments may be welcome, but also may give false hope. After all, it is South Africa's governmental representatives -- not Zuma -- who will be sitting at the table tomorrow when SADC leaders convene to discuss the crisis. END COMMENT.

14. (U) This message was drafted in conjunction with ConGen
Durban.
BOST